

Office of Adult Education

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 3 MARCH 2012



this issue

OAE Updates P.1
Teacher Spotlight Conference
Presentations P.2
GED Success Stories P.3
2012 MAETC P.4
Upcoming Events P.5

OAE UPDATES

MAERS 2.0:

There are currently 23,180 participant registrations in MAERS! The Office of Adult Education will be reviewing reports monthly to ensure that programs are entering data into the system in a timely manner. It is possible that your program may receive a phone call from our office. This call is simply to act as a reminder and offer any guidance or technical assistance that you may have regarding the entry of your MAERS 2.0 data. Please remember that if you do have questions, you may always send an email to MAERS2.0@michigan.gov or call the MAERS Help Desk at 313-456-3200.



FEDERAL GRANT:

By now, every program should have received notification of how they performed in the 2010-11 program year. Those programs that have met at least one, or all performance measures must modify their PY11-12 budget to reflect their performance funding amount, per direction sent to your program earlier from the Office of Adult Education. Please make sure to do this as soon as possible.

2012-2014

FEDERAL GRANT APPLICATION

The announcement for the 2012-14 WIA II grant application will take place by the end of the 2nd week in April 2012.

From the Desk of Dianne Duthie, Director Education and Career Success

Finally, spring is here and the weather has been absolutely beautiful for March. I know many of you are beginning to look forward to graduation and the end of the school year. It is amazing how time flies when we are so busy. I want to thank all of you who have invited me to your graduation ceremonies and have asked me to speak. I would like to be with all of you, but since that is not possible, please make certain that you send my best wishes to your graduates this year.

I am so looking forward to seeing many of you at the MAETC in Traverse City in a month. It really should be a wonderful conference with many great workshops to help assist you as you continue to build exceptional adult education programs in Michigan. The conference will also have the GED examiners workshop beginning on Monday evening with a reception. Several GEDTS staff will be with us for the event and will also be on hand to provide clearer explanations of the new test, which is due to premier in 2014.

There are many great articles in the newsletter this month along with some links to valuable information. We have also included upcoming events for April.

I hope you enjoy the newsletter.

Happy Spring!

Van Buren Intermediate School District Breaking Barriers Through Technology

Distance learning providing virtual bridges to education

Van Buren Intermediate School District's Adult Education Program in Lawrence, Michigan has begun using innovative technology applications in an effort to increase access to adult learning. Using programs such as Cisco Teleconferencing, Tandberg Units, and MOVI, the VBISD is bringing the classroom to the learner instead of the traditional method of bringing the learner to the classroom. The use of advanced technology allows the VBISD and its partners to bring virtual tutoring, small group and whole class instruction, in addition to online assessments to adult education audiences throughout Van Buren County in a more efficient and cost-effective manner.

Partners that serve as satellite instructional sites for the VBISD Adult Ed program are Covert Public Schools, South Haven Public Schools, Bloomingdale Public Schools, and the Immaculate Conception Parish in Hartland. These sites are equipped to transform the traditional learning environment to a distance learning environment. This instructional delivery model has one instructor who delivers instruction to the multiple sites, supported by a (facilitator) instructional assistant and community volunteers.

Technology has been essential to the transformation of the VBISD's English as a Second Language (ESL) and General Equivalency Diploma (GED) preparation program. This collaboration has afforded approximately an average of 25 ESL/GED learners per site or approximately 100 students to utilize the online assessments Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) and Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) and a wealth of online ESL/GED resources. The IDEAL language program "USA Learns", "English for all", "Rosetta Stone", and E2020 GED Prep software are currently being used.

This instructional model encourages the implementation of best practices with a blended use of technology without sacrificing the teacher student relationship that is essential to a positive learning environment. The model empowers students to use the computer access to engage in language programs, career exploration, and seek employment opportunities online during their personal time.

The VBISD has partnered with the MSU High School Equivalency Program to provide pre-GED preparation in English and Spanish. The traditional delivery is supported by MSU virtual bilingual tutors, residing in Lansing, who provide individualized instructional support to small groups of Adult Ed students in numerous subject areas, with the use of the CISCO MOVI software.

Collaborating with the ESL program, VBISD's Project LEAN (Linking Education, Activity and Nutrition) USDA SANP-Ed nutrition program has been providing hands-on nutrition education lessons with the children of the ESL learners. The result is a dual benefit to the family, allowing for the parents to learn ESL and the children to be engaged in active learning. Each week the children are given a fun, engaging core standards nutrition lesson from a Project LEAN Nutrition Educator, followed by a health food tasting they prepare themselves. The program also stressed the importance of physical activity by having the children try various forms such as dance, yoga, volleyball and soccer. The children have truly enjoyed learning and engaging in health literacy based activities while their parents work to better themselves using technology.



**For more information, check out our [PREZI](#)

Earning a GED: Struggles and Success

GED Success Story Testimonials from Capital Area Literacy Coalition

"I'm sick of being a loser" is an all-too-common answer to the question "Why do you want a GED?" The Capital Area Literacy Coalition provides the opportunity to practice and prepare for the GED in a private, non-judgmental, supportive environment. Students work at their own pace with tutors and technology. CALC staff uses practice testing to determine when a student is ready for the official test. Students come to CALC with a vague sense that a GED certificate can open doors. They leave empowered with a confidence only hard work and success can create.

◆ **Jennifer** was a young mother with a nine-month old baby and a full-time job stocking produce. Jennifer began home-schooling in the sixth grade. The situation dissolved before the academic year was up, and Jenn's schooling ended. With only a sixth-grade education, Jenn had little hope for the future. She felt crippled by her test anxiety: She worried that even though she preformed well on her practice test that she would buckle under the pressure of a real testing situation. Jenn took the official reading test after a year of study. To her surprise, she scored a near-perfect 780! Her confidence soared. Jenn continued to study, and continued to pass tests. Before the ink was dry on her new certificate, Jenn admitted a secret she kept hidden for years: she wanted to be a nutritionist. Jenn never spoke of this because before her GED testing success, it seemed ridiculous and far-fetched. Before it was a dream; now it is a goal. When she first enrolled in CALC's GED program, she lacked the confidence to write even one sentence.

Jenn plans to continue her studies at LCC. Her first class is writing. The day Jenn's certificate came in the mail, her fiancé called. Jenn, he said, inspired him to start working towards his own dreams.

◆ **Jeff** is a young father who works as a cook at a local eatery. His employer offered him a promotion to kitchen manager, but the job required a diploma or GED. Jeff, who dropped out of school in the ninth grade, was not eligible for the job. His co-worker, David, suggested that Jeff call the Capital Area Literacy Coalition. David was already a CALC student, who works with a tutor at the local library every week on his day off. Jeff was apprehensive at first. He had not taken a test in over ten years. He thought he could never pass the GED test! With CALC's help, Jeff did pass the GED test. When he saw his final scores, he chuckled and exclaimed "I wish I had done this sooner. I was too stupid to know I was smart." Jeff left CALC with a GED certificate, a newfound self-confidence, and a stack of books for his four year-old son.

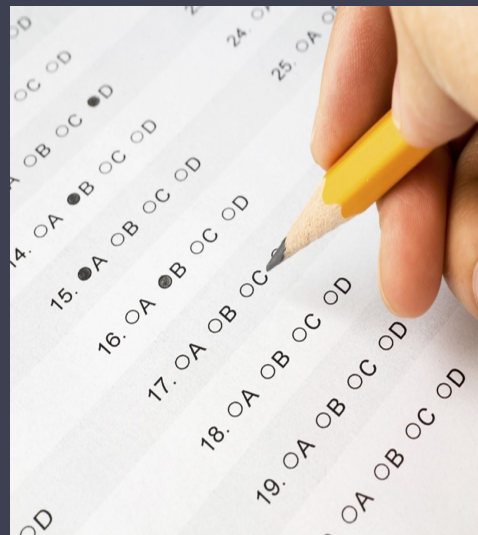
◆ **Scott** took his first GED test nine years ago, when he was in prison. He has been a busy man ever since, working hard, and being a good husband and father. In fact, Scott came to CALC because he wanted to be a good role model for his two young teen daughters. He wanted to show them the value of education. Passing the GED was not an easy task for Scott. At 35, he had been out of school for the better part of two decades. His scores in math, writing, and science were dreadfully low. Scott worked with his tutor Bill for over a year, while Scott was also working two jobs, parenting two teen girls, and coping with his mother's passing and his broth-

ers' heart attack. The day the passing notice came in, Scott submitted his Free Application for Federal Student Aid so that he could begin training to become a certified electrician. After that, Scott and his tutor Bill took their wives out to celebrate.

◆ **Armando** is a young man originally from Texas. His parents were Mexican immigrants, and he did not learn a word of English until he entered kindergarten. This left him at a considerable disadvantage, but Armando loved learning nonetheless. When his family moved from Texas to Michigan, though, he felt uncomfortable at Everett High School and just left. Armando's dream was to be a Navy Seal. He knew that the Navy required a GED certificate and several college credits. He began working with a CALC tutor and taking community college courses while also working a full time job. He worked his way through test after test for over a year and a half. Armando had to work a long shift the day the results of his final test came in. He asked CALC staff to call his mother with the results because he would not be free to take a phone call himself. His mother sobbed when she heard the news! When Armando saw his final scores, he beamed. "Not bad for an ESL (English as a Second Language)," he said.

The GED is a small step on a long journey toward success. But in many ways it is the most important. Students leave CALC knowing that they can take on the world, because even they, the dropouts, could pass the GED exam. With sections on Math, Writing, Social Studies, Reading and Science, the GED is not an easy test. In a recent study, employers reported they had more confidence in an applicant's ability with a GED certificate than a high school diploma. Our students are right to feel proud of their accomplishments.

*Submitted by Amanda Levensgood, CALC GED Coordinator



Teacher Spotlight

Teacher Spotlight Presentation at the 2012 MAETC

In the last issue of the newsletter, we met the winners of the Teacher Spotlight. For this issue, not only will you meet them again, but you will also catch a glimpse of what their presentations will be at the 2012 MAETC.

- ◆ **Ben Hassenger, A+ Language School—Using Music to Help Students Build Language Skills:** Music is a motivating way to teach such language skills as vocabulary, pronunciation and projection as well as American Culture. Learn about the A+ Ukulele Orchestra and how it provides a fun and exciting way to learn English.

- ◆ **Malissa Smith, Milan Area Schools—Creating a Bridge for the ABE Student into the Workforce:** Participants in this teacher spotlight session will learn more about how to contextualize reading, writing, and math in order to help bridge the gap between corrections and community reentry.



- ◆ **Candice Taylor and Emily Norton, Southwest Solutions Adult Learning Lab—ESL/GED Transitions—Bridging the Learning Gap:** The ESL/GED Transitions Program was created to bridge the learning gap for students who are preparing for the GED® test and who struggle with the use of the English Language. Learn more about how this type



of transition program can be successful in your program by attending this teacher spotlight session.

- ◆ **Gerald (Jerry) P. Hawes, Northwest Michigan Works (TBAISD) Kalkaska Learning Lab—Registration to Graduation—Managing an Adult Learning Lab:** This teacher spotlight session highlights the steps that the Kalkaska Adult Learning Lab has taken to ensure success for all students—from registration to graduation.

- ◆ **Susan Duryea, Dominican Literacy Center—The Road Trip Lesson—Putting Real Life Situation to Work in the Classroom:** How do you integrate math and social studies into the adult education classroom? Take a road trip! This teacher spotlight session will have participants using real-world skills to map out a road trip to the destination of their choice.

- ◆ **Christine Schneider, Novi Adult/Alternative Education—Using Non-Traditional Techniques to Teach Geometry:** Looking for new strategies and techniques to teach students about quadrilaterals? Learn how to connect basic geometry to real-world and workplace situations through a collaborative, accountable, responsive, contextualized and entrepreneurial approach.

Partnership in Paw Paw

Michigan Avenue Academy (MAA), an historic landmark in Paw Paw, Michigan, houses Paw Paw Public Schools' Adult and Alternative Education programs. The old, two story brick school's 400 seat auditorium was in sad need of repair two years ago and was only used for student activities. Cracked seats, peeling paint and water stains marred the once stately venue. The needed repairs were cost prohibitive for Paw Paw's self sustaining community education program.

When Freshwater Community Church approached the school with a proposal to renovate the auditorium and enter into a facility use agreement to house their church gatherings and activities at MAA, positive things began to happen for both the school and the church. News of the renovation taking place behind the plastic sealing off the auditorium quickly spread among MAA students and staff. The final transformation was amazing. Today, the MAA auditorium is a beautiful space used by the community as well as by the school and the church.

Now in its second year, the collaboration between the school and the church continues to grow. Co-sponsored events bring community members into the school for service projects and recreational activities. Nearly 500 people attend Sunday gatherings, youth groups meet weekly in the evenings, and church members continue to support the school with building improvement projects. Plans for creating a space for delivery of support services to community members in need are in the works. Positive, dynamic connections between the school and the community are alive and growing in Paw Paw!



MAETC 2012

The Michigan Adult Education Training Conference for 2012, will kick off on Tuesday, April 24th with the GED Examiners Training, and will wrap up on Friday, April 27th with the state update and concurrent sessions. Not only is the hope that this stretch of warm weather will hold out to partake in the extra-curriculars that the beautiful setting of Traverse City has to offer, but that this will be the Office of Adult Education's best conference yet!

We are excited to bring to you a four-module session on Learning to Achieve. Developed by the National Institute for Literacy, the Learning to Achieve program is based on the latest research to increase knowledge of learning disabilities.

New to the conference this year is a MAERS 2.0 open lab. You will be able to sit with a member of the MAERS 2.0 Training Team and receive one-on-one help to address your specific questions. Just remember to bring your MAERS User ID and Password!

Also, included in the conference schedule this year are presentations by MAACE (Michigan Association for Adult and Continuing Education); the Adult Education Practitioner's Task Force, including the Data Task Force and the Curriculum Task Force; NHRD (National Human Resources Development); several of the testing services that you may use in your programs;

State agencies as the Workforce Development Agency, LARA (Licensing and Regulatory Affairs), and the Michigan Department of Education.

On Wednesday, April 25th, make sure to join us for the Grand Opening and Welcome to the Conference Luncheon from 11:30 am—1:30 pm in the Michigan Ballroom.

During the lunch on Thursday, we will welcome keynote speaker, Dr. Charles Petty. Dr. Petty is a professional motivational speaker who speaks primarily on work/life balance. He also believes audiences learn better if they enjoy what is being said, so he packages life-changing principles in humor.

MAETC Registration Still Open!

If you have not yet registered for the 2012 MAETC, there is still time! Visit www.maepd.org to register. Please note that the conference room rate expired on March 22, 2012.

You are responsible for making your own room reservations. Click [here](#) to access the hotel website.

Grand Traverse Resort

100 Grand Traverse Village Blvd.

Acme, MI 49610

P: 800-236-1577



Tentative Schedule of Events

Monday, April 23rd, 6pm

- ◆ GED and Early Arrival Reception

Tuesday, April 24th, 8:30am—4pm

- ◆ GED Examiners Training

Wednesday, April 25th, 8:30am—5pm

- ◆ Intensive Half-day Trainings—AM
- ◆ Awards Luncheon
- ◆ Concurrent Sessions—PM
- ◆ 5pm—7pm Grand Opening with Exhibitors

Thursday, April 26th, 8:30am—5pm

- ◆ Concurrent Sessions—AM and PM
- ◆ Motivational Luncheon Speaker
- ◆ MAACE Sessions—PM

Friday, April 27th, 8:30am—Noon

- ◆ **State Update**
- ◆ Concurrent Sessions; MAACE Sessions
- ◆ Boxed Lunch Provided

**Please note, this schedule is subject to change.*

The GED Examiners Training will be held on the 24th, regardless of any other schedule changes.



Upcoming Events

April 12: MACAE Focus Groups

Middle Cities bldg./MACAE Office @ 10am—3pm

April 13: ESL Professional Advisory Committee

A+ English Language School @ 10am

April 17: MACAE Alternative Education Institute

“Continuous School Improvement” - MACAE One-day workshop

9am—2:15pm @ Lansing Radisson Hotel

April 24-27: Michigan Adult Education Training Conference

Grand Traverse Resort, Traverse City, MI

April 25-27: MAEO Conference

Bay Valley Resort, 2470 Old Bridge Road, Bay City, MI 48706

OAE Contacts

Dianne Duthie, Director of Education and Career Success

517-373-8800

Cliff Akujobi 517-373-4218

Marissa Clark 517-241-6574

Barb Elkins 517-373-7428

Brian Frazier 517-241-3256

Tammy Hernandez 517-241-1018

Patty Higgins 517-373-0815

Erica Luce 517-335-0634

Sue Muzillo 517-241-1016

Ryan Pohl 517-241-6939

Sandy Thelen 517-373-3395

Kate Wolinski 517-373-6911

GED STAFF

Keenan Wade 517-373-8281

Jeannie Flak 517-373-2103

Amy Heckman 517-373-0965

FAX NUMBERS

Adult Education 517-335-3630

GED 517-335-3461

EDUCATION AND CAREER SUCCESS

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

State of Michigan
Victor Office Center, 201 N. Washington Square, 2nd Floor
Lansing, MI 48913

517.373.8800 ph

www.michigan.gov/adulteducation